

Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension of the Struggling Readers of Aragon Elementary School, Davao Oriental Division: A Descriptive-Correlational Approach

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Date Submitted:
January 14, 2026

Date Accepted:
February 9, 2026

Date Published:
February 27, 2026

DOI:
10.5281/zenodo.18803087

ABSTRACT

This study explores the factors influencing reading comprehension among struggling readers at Aragon Elementary School, Davao Oriental Division, through a descriptive-correlational approach. Reading comprehension is essential for academic success and lifelong learning, yet Filipino learners, especially in rural areas, face persistent challenges due to resource scarcity, socioeconomic barriers, limited preschool education, and post-pandemic disruptions. The research focuses on four variables: home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety. Findings from related literature reveal that inadequate parental support, lack of culturally relevant materials, and low engagement in shared reading hinder literacy development, while motivation and emotional factors strongly affect comprehension outcomes. International assessments such as PISA and PIRLS highlight the Philippines' low performance, with national programs like "Catch-Up Fridays" offering limited impact due to the absence of localized strategies. This study underscores the importance of early interventions, teacher training, and family engagement in addressing reading struggles in rural schools. By examining the interplay of home and school factors, it aims to inform responsive literacy programs that foster academic growth, confidence, and equity among struggling readers, contributing to efforts to bridge literacy gaps in low-resource educational settings.

Keywords: *Reading comprehension, struggling readers, home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, language anxiety, rural education, literacy gap, Philippines, descriptive-correlational study*

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is a vital skill for academic success and lifelong learning, enabling students to process information across disciplines and develop intellectually and socially (Mantra et al., 2020; Zhou, 2024). It is cultivated through early and systematic instruction, allowing learners to build coherent mental representations of texts for deeper understanding (Zhou, 2024; van den Broek & Kendeou, 2022). In classrooms, it supports critical thinking and motivation, especially when paired with collaborative strategies like reciprocal teaching (Basoeki et al., 2020). Context-specific techniques further enhance its effectiveness across age groups and subjects (Campo & Alulima, 2024), making reading comprehension indispensable for navigating and contributing meaningfully to society (van den Broek & Kendeou, 2022).

However, the reading crisis in the Philippines stems from systemic and localized issues, including resource scarcity and socioeconomic barriers that hinder students' comprehension and critical thinking (Mariposa & Bautista, 2023). In rural areas like Cateel, Davao Oriental, language use and lack of preschool education further delay literacy development (Yustisia & Salsabila, 2023). Post-pandemic challenges have worsened reading difficulties, particularly among Grade 4 learners (Nava, 2024). While the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy supports access to education, it struggles with declining parental involvement and an overreliance on standardized assessments that overlook rural learners' needs (Gatcho et al., 2024). Calls for early childhood education, teacher training, and culturally relevant reading materials are increasing (Mariposa & Bautista, 2023; Yustisia & Salsabila, 2023), with technical assistance seen as vital to improving literacy programs (Nava, 2024). A study by Basali (2024) found that most Grade 8 students remained at the instructional level, scoring only 79% on comprehension, with context clues identified as a major weakness.

Moreover, despite numerous interventions, the reading gap in the Philippines remains a pressing issue. National assessments continue to reveal low reading proficiency, prompting DepEd to introduce efforts like the Informal Reading Inventory for Senior High School and "Catch-Up Fridays" for Grade 8 (Basali, 2024; Cainoy et al., 2024). However, the lack of specialized tools for certain levels limits these programs' impact (Cainoy et al., 2024). Socioeconomic barriers and resource scarcity further hinder reading comprehension, vocabulary, and critical thinking development (Mariposa & Bautista, 2023). Teachers have employed strategies like free reading choice and phonological activities, yet access to culturally relevant and engaging materials remains limited (Rosales, 2024). Disparities linked to gender and home language use also affect comprehension outcomes, demanding more targeted solutions (Basali, 2024). These ongoing challenges highlight the need for sustained, innovative, and collaborative approaches to effectively close the literacy gap (Cainoy et al., 2024; Mariposa & Bautista, 2023).

Further, the home literacy environment (HLE) and parental involvement are key contributors to reading outcomes among children in the Philippines and globally. Low reading literacy in Filipino pupils is often linked to inadequate parental support and limited access to reading materials and facilities (Librea et al., 2023). A quality HLE, including both resources and parent-child interactions, significantly fosters linguistic and literacy development (Niklas et al., 2020). Parents' positive attitudes toward shared reading correlate with stronger language skills, and they often adjust their support based on their child's progress, reflecting a dynamic, bidirectional relationship (Niklas et al., 2020; Society for Research in Child Development, 2021). Although family risk factors like parental reading difficulties can hinder progress, a

rich HLE and higher parental education can buffer these effects (Esmaeeli, 2022). Early emergent literacy skills, such as notational awareness, also mediate the link between HLE and later reading success, emphasizing the value of early interventions (Bigozzi et al., 2023).

Furthermore, reading motivation and language anxiety also serve as critical contributors to reading gaps among Filipino learners. Motivation significantly influences enjoyment and anxiety in language learning, including for learners of languages other than English (Quinto et al., 2023), while emotions are strong predictors of reading comprehension and academic achievement (Wirth et al., 2022). Language anxiety, particularly during reading, is prevalent among Filipino students and has been intensified by remote learning challenges and limited interaction (Labicane, 2021). Fears of making mistakes and negative evaluation further hinder reading performance (Labicane, 2021; Rianawati et al., 2024). Among education students, English apprehension is often tied to self-doubt and fear of judgment, leading to disengagement from reading tasks (Valdellon & Lovitos, 2022). These findings underscore the need for interventions that address both motivation and anxiety through increased exposure, supportive environments, and consistent reading practice (Valdellon & Lovitos, 2022; Wirth et al., 2022).

Drawing out the context, current literature on reading gaps in the Philippines reveals several underexplored areas. Despite growing recognition of early interventions, research focusing on kindergarten and elementary pupils remains limited, with most studies centered on higher education levels (Lopez, 2023; Mariposa & Bautista, 2023). Socioeconomic influences on literacy outcomes are acknowledged but not comprehensively studied (Mariposa & Bautista, 2023). There is also a lack of research on the development and use of culturally relevant reading materials to enhance comprehension and vocabulary (Mariposa & Bautista, 2023). Moreover, effective teacher training programs for reading instruction and their implementation are insufficiently explored (Librea et al., 2023; Mariposa & Bautista, 2023). Parental and community involvement in literacy development, though identified as crucial, also lacks extensive study (Librea et al., 2023). Finally, the role of critical thinking in reading among younger learners is rarely addressed (Lopez, 2023). Thus, filling these gaps could strengthen reading literacy initiatives across educational levels.

Although national and regional studies highlight the reading crisis among Filipino learners, they often examine motivation, home environment, or anxiety in isolation. What is missing are localized, school-based investigations that explore how these factors interact in real rural classrooms with limited resources and varying parental support. At Aragon Elementary School, this issue is not merely statistical, but rather personal and persistent. Hence, a descriptive-correlational study is essential to uncover the lived realities behind the numbers and guide practical, community-based solutions for struggling readers.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the deeper factors influencing reading struggles among identified struggling readers at Aragon Elementary School. It explores how home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety relate to their reading levels. By capturing what learners experience both at home and in school, the study seeks to inform more responsive reading interventions and family engagement strategies suited to the needs of rural learners—promoting not only academic growth, but also confidence and equity.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill that underpins academic achievement, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. However, despite its importance, a persistent reading gap continues to affect many Filipino learners, particularly in rural and low-resource settings. This review of literature examines the nature, prevalence, and contributing factors of reading difficulties, with a focus on four key variables—home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety.

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill that plays a crucial role in academic success, professional advancement, and personal growth. It is defined as the ability to understand, interpret, and derive meaning from written texts, which is essential for learning across various subjects and for effective communication in everyday life (Bakhtiyorovna, 2024; Setiorini et al., 2022). The importance of reading comprehension extends beyond the classroom, as it is a key competence required for college readiness and employment, making it a vital component of secondary education curricula (Shelton & Wexler, 2022).

In the context of language learning, particularly for English as a Second Language (ESL) students, reading comprehension is a cognitive process that involves decoding and processing text, which is crucial for achieving proficiency in a foreign language (Ciocoi-Pop, 2020). Moreover, reading comprehension is linked to other linguistic abilities such as vocabulary, syntax processing, and the ability to make inferences, all of which contribute to a deeper understanding of texts (Ferroni & Jaichenco, 2022). Effective reading comprehension strategies, such as skimming, scanning, and vocabulary building, can enhance students' ability to understand and retain information, thereby improving their overall literacy skills (Muallim & Hasanah, 2024).

As a foundational skill, reading comprehension is integral to the development of human capital, serving as a building block for further educational and professional achievements (Dokhkilgova, 2024). Therefore, educators are encouraged to implement evidence-based literacy instruction and interventions that target multiple aspects of reading comprehension to support students' learning and development (Setiorini et al., 2022; Shelton & Wexler, 2022).

Reading comprehension is crucial for academic success and lifelong learning, as it enables understanding and engagement with complex texts across disciplines. Strategies like questioning, predicting, and group reading improve critical thinking, vocabulary acquisition, and foster a lifelong passion for reading (Ashford, 2024).

The relationship between reading ability and academic achievement is further supported by Esleta et al. (2024), who found a significant correlation between reading skills and success in subjects like English, Math, and Science, underscoring the necessity of strong reading comprehension for academic performance. Moreover, Bakhtiyorovna (2024) discusses various strategies to improve reading comprehension, such as Socratic questioning and argument analysis, which enhance critical thinking and information retention, essential for both academic and professional success.

Puusepp et al. (2023) highlight the interplay between students' learning-related beliefs and reading strategies, noting that deep comprehension strategies are linked to better academic outcomes and reduced academic exhaustion. Mahmoud (2020) emphasizes the role of reading comprehension in language

acquisition and communicative competence, which are vital for academic success and everyday life. James and Selvam's (2024) review further connects reading comprehension with critical thinking, identifying these skills as interconnected and essential for problem-solving and argumentation.

Sari et al. (2024) demonstrate that motivation significantly enhances reading comprehension, which in turn boosts academic achievement, suggesting that motivational strategies should be integrated into reading instruction. Nobles and Ortega-Dela Cruz (2020) advocate for metacognitive strategies like making connections to improve comprehension, which leads to higher academic success. Rif'attullah and Putra (2023) discuss the Self-Regulated Strategy Development model, which empowers students to become independent readers, fostering lifelong learning.

Finally, Arifin (2020) highlights the importance of critical reading in developing critical thinking skills, which are crucial for comprehending complex academic texts and succeeding in higher education. Collectively, these studies underscore the integral role of reading comprehension in academic success and lifelong learning, advocating for diverse strategies to enhance these skills across educational contexts.

International frameworks for reading comprehension, such as the National Reading Panel (NRP) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), play a crucial role in shaping educational practices and policies worldwide. The NRP, for instance, emphasizes the importance of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension as key components of reading instruction, which are essential for developing reading comprehension skills in students (Butterfuss et al., 2020).

PISA, on the other hand, provides a comprehensive framework for assessing reading literacy across different countries, focusing on students' ability to understand, use, and reflect on written texts to achieve their goals and develop their knowledge and potential (Iskakova & Sultanbekova, n.d.; OECD, 2023). The PISA framework has evolved over the years, incorporating new elements to better assess reading literacy in diverse contexts, such as the inclusion of digital texts and the assessment of students' ability to navigate and comprehend multiple sources of information (OECD, 2023).

Additionally, the PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) framework complements these efforts by assessing reading literacy at the primary school level, focusing on cognitive processes and the purposes of reading, such as reading for information and literary experience (Taylor, 2023). These international frameworks are informed by various theoretical models of reading comprehension, including the Simple View of Reading and the Construction-Integration Model, which highlight the interplay between decoding, language comprehension, and cognitive processes in understanding texts (Grabe & Yamashita, 2022).

Furthermore, these frameworks consider the sociocultural context of reading, acknowledging that individual differences, such as prior knowledge and working memory, significantly impact reading comprehension (Butterfuss et al., 2020; Gutiérrez & Santamaría, 2021). The integration of these frameworks into educational systems worldwide has led to innovations in reading instruction, assessment, and intervention programs, aiming to improve reading comprehension skills and address the diverse needs of learners (Ainley & Schulz, 2020; Steklács et al., 2020). Overall, international frameworks like NRP and PISA provide valuable guidelines for educators and policymakers to enhance reading comprehension and literacy outcomes globally.

The status of reading comprehension among Filipino students, as assessed by various national and international metrics, reveals significant challenges and areas for improvement. The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) is a key tool used to gauge reading proficiency at the school level, assessing students' word recognition and comprehension through both silent and oral reading tests (Villalva, 2023).

A study on Grade 8 students at Baguio City National Science High School using Phil-IRI found that most students were at the instructional and independent reading levels, with a mean comprehension score of 79% (Basali, 2024). However, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results paint a more concerning picture, with Filipino students ranking last in reading proficiency in 2018, and only 19% meeting the minimum standard (Bernardo et al., 2021).

The 2022 PISA results showed no significant improvement, highlighting a robust correlation between PISA scores and the Human Development Index (HDI) in the Philippines (Acido & Caballes, 2024). The challenges in reading comprehension are attributed to factors such as socioeconomic constraints, lack of resources, and insufficient instructional time (Mariposa & Bautista, 2023) (Apiles, 2025). Moreover, the reading curriculum in the Philippines has been found to have low alignment between the intended and implemented curriculum, with many students remaining non-readers even at the secondary level (Abejuela et al., 2023).

Interventions like "Catch-Up Fridays" and the Holistic Literacy Enhancement Program (HLEP) have been proposed to address these issues by focusing on targeted skill improvement and equitable resource allocation (Basali, 2024; Gatcho et al., 2024). Despite these efforts, the need for a comprehensive approach that includes early literacy programs, teacher training, and culturally relevant materials remains critical to improving reading comprehension outcomes in the Philippines (Apiles, 2025; Mariposa & Bautista, 2023).

In the Philippine context, reading comprehension trends in rural and local areas reveal significant challenges and disparities. Studies indicate that Filipino students generally struggle with reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and critical thinking skills, with these issues being exacerbated by socioeconomic factors and a lack of resources (Mariposa & Bautista, 2023). In rural areas, such as those in the Province of Sorsogon, reading performance is notably poor, with a significant number of students requiring intervention to meet basic reading expectations (Bernarte & Digo, 2024).

Similarly, in last-mile schools in Negros Occidental, students exhibit average comprehension levels, but struggle particularly with appreciative comprehension, highlighting the need for more engaging and contextually relevant reading materials (Medel, 2024). The disparity between rural and urban students is further emphasized in the Urabá area, where rural students show very low reading comprehension levels compared to their urban counterparts (Córdoba, 2023).

Efforts to address these challenges include the implementation of programs like "Catch-Up Fridays" by the Department of Education, which aims to improve reading skills and address comprehension gaps among students (Basali, 2024). Additionally, the introduction of Mother-Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) has shown potential in improving reading performance in local languages, although challenges remain due to a lack of contextualized materials and resources (Germino, 2023).

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy also aims to provide equitable access to quality literacy education, but faces challenges such as socioeconomic disparities and insufficient community involvement (Gatcho et al., 2024). Overall, these findings underscore the need for targeted interventions, culturally relevant materials, and enhanced teacher training to improve reading comprehension among Filipino students, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

The post-pandemic effects on reading and reading comprehension in the Philippines have been significant, with various studies highlighting the challenges and potential solutions. The pandemic exacerbated existing reading difficulties among learners, as evidenced by low proficiency levels in reading and arithmetic among Grade 5 learners in the Davao Region, with mean scores of 18.13% and 5.45% respectively, indicating a need for strengthened intervention programs across the K to 12 curriculum (Into, 2024).

Similarly, Grade 4 learners in Negros Occidental exhibited moderate reading difficulties, with significant disparities based on socio-economic factors such as parents' educational attainment and family income, underscoring the need for targeted teacher training and sustainable reading programs (Nava, 2024).

The shift to distance learning during the pandemic further complicated literacy instruction, with a noted increase in non-readers and frustrated readers upon the return to face-to-face classes, prompting schools to adopt macro- and micro-management strategies to address these challenges (Divinagracia, 2024). Despite these difficulties, some resilience was observed, particularly in lower-SES schools that utilized digital means and parental collaboration to mitigate the negative impacts of lockdowns on reading comprehension (Segers et al., 2022).

However, the abrupt transition to e-learning was not universally effective, as seen in the experiences of students at De La Salle University Manila, where the shift led to significant disruptions and calls for better support and infrastructure to ensure the success of online learning (Irie et al., 2021). Teachers in urban poor areas have been motivated to bridge learning gaps through various reading strategies and community-oriented interventions, highlighting the importance of teacher agency in addressing post-pandemic educational challenges (Rosales, 2024).

The implementation of the Basic Education-Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) also played a role in maintaining educational continuity, though challenges in reading performance persisted, necessitating ongoing curriculum adjustments and interventions (Go et al., 2022). Innovative strategies such as the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) have shown promise in improving reading comprehension skills, suggesting that the adoption of effective learning strategies can aid in the recovery of students' reading abilities post-pandemic (Brilliananda & Wibowo, 2023). Overall, the post-pandemic landscape in the Philippines calls for comprehensive, evidence-based approaches to enhance reading comprehension and address the educational disparities exacerbated by the pandemic.

Factors Contributing to Reading Gaps

Home Literacy Environment

Access to materials is a significant factor contributing to reading gaps, as evidenced by various studies across different contexts. In South Africa, disadvantaged rural communities face substantial barriers

in accessing reading materials, which hinders the development of reading habits and skills necessary for socioeconomic advancement. The lack of community libraries and digital infrastructure exacerbates these gaps, suggesting a need for government intervention to provide adequate resources and encourage reading culture (Mojapelo, 2023).

Similarly, in Indonesia, limited access to diverse reading materials in schools, coupled with insufficient family support and unengaging teaching methods, contributes to low literacy levels among students. This highlights the importance of collaborative efforts between schools and families to enhance reading skills (Nainggolan et al., 2024). In Uganda, university students' access to online reading materials is influenced by factors such as the availability of ICT equipment and the type of degree pursued, indicating disparities in resource accessibility that affect academic performance (Nassanga et al., 2024).

The digital divide is further emphasized by findings from the PISA 2018 results, which show that while access to digital resources is improving, socioeconomically disadvantaged students still face challenges in accessing print books, impacting their reading performance and enjoyment (Ikeda & Rech, 2022). In Rwanda, the presence of well-equipped libraries with English reading materials in schools is linked to improved student performance, underscoring the critical role of resource availability in literacy development (Harerimana et al., 2024).

Additionally, environmental and socioeconomic factors, such as prenatal exposure to pollutants and material hardship, have been shown to negatively impact reading skills, particularly in economically disadvantaged children, highlighting the complex interplay between environmental conditions and access to educational resources (Greenwood et al., 2023). These findings collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of reading gaps, where access to materials, both physical and digital, plays a crucial role in shaping literacy outcomes across different educational and socioeconomic contexts.

Family reading practices significantly contribute to reading gaps, as evidenced by various studies that highlight the multifaceted role of the family environment in shaping children's reading abilities. Shared reading practices within families are consistently associated with improved critical reading skills, as they provide children with access to diverse literacy materials and foster a culture of reading from an early age (Boyett, 2021; Psyridou et al., 2024).

The availability of resources and the frequency of literacy activities at home are crucial, with higher socioeconomic status (SES) families often having more access to books and educational materials, which correlates with better reading outcomes (Peras et al., 2023; Psyridou et al., 2024). In contrast, disadvantaged communities, such as those in rural South Africa, face significant gaps in the reading ecosystem due to limited access to resources and inadequate infrastructure, which hinders the development of reading habits and skills (Mojapelo, 2023).

The quality of parent-child interactions and parental involvement in literacy activities are also pivotal, as they directly influence children's reading proficiency and intellectual growth (Arandas, 2023; Gagné et al., 2022). Moreover, the emotional and psychological atmosphere at home, including factors like parenting stress, can impact the effectiveness of family literacy practices, with stress potentially diminishing the benefits of reading activities (Gagné et al., 2022).

Cultural and language factors further contribute to reading gaps, as children whose home language aligns with the language of instruction tend to perform better in reading assessments (Psyridou et al., 2024). Overall, the integration of affective characteristics, such as educational practices and the emotional climate of the family, into literacy activities can enhance children's reading abilities, suggesting that targeted interventions should consider these dimensions to effectively address reading gaps (Gagné et al., 2022; Mukhlis, 2023).

The Home Literacy Environment (HLE) plays a crucial role in early language and literacy development across various contexts, as evidenced by multiple studies. In bilingual settings, such as Korean-English and Hebrew-Russian families, the HLE significantly influences literacy skills in both heritage and dominant languages. Active and direct literacy practices are essential for heritage language development, while indirect methods suffice for dominant language skills, highlighting the importance of a robust HLE in bilingual families to promote language proficiency and conceptual skills (Kim & Yim, 2024; Minkov & Aram, 2024).

Similarly, in Spanish-English bilingual children, the HLE, along with parental occupation education, predicts oral language and phonological awareness, underscoring its impact on both inside-out and outside-in literacy skills (Карпіцький, 2023). Beyond early childhood, the HLE continues to affect literacy outcomes, with access to literacy resources and independent reading being significant predictors of reading and spelling performance in upper grades (Georgiou & Zhang, 2024).

The quality of parent-child interactions and joint literacy activities within the HLE are positively correlated with children's language comprehension, emphasizing the role of parents in enhancing comprehension through shared activities (Ramlan et al., 2024). Parental attitudes towards shared reading also mediate the relationship between the HLE and children's linguistic competencies, suggesting that positive attitudes contribute to a higher quality HLE and better language outcomes (Niklas et al., 2020).

In bilingual families, the structure of the HLE varies between languages, with shared reading positively influencing ethnic language outcomes but negatively affecting English outcomes, indicating the need for further research on long-term effects (O'Brien et al., 2024). For children with autism, the HLE predicts literacy development directly and indirectly through reading interest and parent-child relationships, highlighting its importance for diverse learners (Huang et al., 2022). In the Chinese context, the HLE is enriched by informal literacy activities and extended family involvement, although academic pressures and a lack of developmental knowledge pose challenges (Xiang, 2024).

Finally, in Hong Kong, the HLE is associated with second language development, with variability in literacy activities impacting English vocabulary and literacy skills, demonstrating the need for diverse literacy activities to support language acquisition (Lau & Richards, 2021). Overall, these studies collectively affirm the significant role of the HLE in fostering early language and literacy development across different linguistic and cultural contexts.

Parental Involvement

Parental attitudes and behaviors significantly contribute to reading gaps among children, as evidenced by various studies. The home literacy environment, particularly maternal reading attitudes and

habits, plays a crucial role in shaping children's reading attitudes, accounting for a substantial variance in their reading development (Altun et al., 2021). Parental involvement in early literacy activities and tasks is also a critical predictor of children's reading proficiency, as seen in the context of Arabic literacy among Emirati children (Alramamneh et al., 2023).

Moreover, the availability of resources and shared reading practices within the family are systematically associated with the development of critical reading skills, highlighting the importance of a supportive family environment (Psyridou et al., 2024). Socioeconomic status (SES) and parental educational attainment further influence children's reading habits, with higher SES and educational levels often correlating with better reading skills (Cochrane et al., 2022; Xu, 2023).

However, disparities in access to resources, particularly in disadvantaged communities, exacerbate reading gaps, underscoring the need for government intervention to provide adequate libraries and digital infrastructure (Mojapelo, 2023). Additionally, the structuring of children's free time by parents, often prioritizing extracurricular activities over reading, can limit opportunities for developing reading skills, although parents who read more tend to encourage their children's reading habits (Matković & Slovaček, 2023).

The lack of parental time and engagement in lifelong learning programs about early reading also contributes to insufficient reading activities with children (Pergar & Hadela, 2021). Overall, these findings suggest that enhancing parental involvement, improving access to reading resources, and fostering a positive reading culture at home are essential strategies for closing reading gaps and supporting children's literacy development.

Parental involvement plays a significant role in enhancing children's academic achievement and reading comprehension, as evidenced by multiple studies. Research consistently shows that active parental engagement, such as assistance with homework, participation in school events, and effective communication with teachers, positively impacts students' academic performance and motivation to learn (Mchia & Mwila, 2024; Omarkhanova et al., 2024; Rantari et al., 2024). Specifically, parent-involved reading activities have been found to significantly improve elementary students' reading comprehension skills, motivation, and attitudes towards reading (Çaliskan & Ulas, 2022).

This is further supported by findings that highlight the importance of early parental involvement in reading activities, such as reading together and storytelling, which are linked to higher reading literacy achievements in later school years (Geske & Ozola, 2020). Moreover, parental involvement is crucial for children with specific challenges, such as hearing impairments, where it can mitigate the negative effects of early-onset hearing loss on reading comprehension (Muitu et al., 2024). The socioeconomic status of families also plays a mediating role, with children from higher socioeconomic backgrounds benefiting more from parental involvement due to greater cultural capital (Şengönül, 2022).

However, even in lower socioeconomic contexts, parental involvement can significantly reduce educational disadvantages and improve academic outcomes (Şengönül, 2022). Meta-analyses confirm a positive correlation between parental involvement and academic achievement, reinforcing the importance of fostering strong parent-school partnerships to support student success (Fatimaningrum, 2022; Sharma, 2024).

Despite these benefits, challenges such as limited time and resources can hinder parental involvement, suggesting a need for schools to provide support and training to parents (Mchia & Mwila, 2024; Rantari et al., 2024). Overall, the evidence underscores the critical role of parental involvement in promoting academic achievement and reading comprehension, advocating for strategies that enhance parental engagement across diverse contexts (Sharma, 2024; Wafa & Muthi, 2024).

Parental involvement is a critical factor in enhancing children's academic achievement and reading comprehension, particularly in rural settings, where unique barriers exist. One significant barrier is the socioeconomic status of families, which often limits the resources and time parents can dedicate to their children's education. This is evident in rural China, where socioeconomic status and family environment significantly impact academic achievement, with parental involvement serving as a mediating factor to mitigate these effects (Gu et al., 2024).

Similarly, in South Africa, the disparity between rural and urban schools is exacerbated by parents' inability to engage due to socioeconomic constraints and limited educational backgrounds, which hinders their capacity to support their children's learning effectively (Morowane & Marishane, 2024). Language barriers also play a role, as seen in rural areas where local dialects impede children's language skills and reading comprehension, further compounded by a lack of preschool education that affects foundational literacy skills (Yustisia & Salsabila, 2023).

Additionally, the lack of effective communication between parents and schools, as well as limited parental understanding of educational materials, further restricts involvement (Perrigo et al., 2022). In Uganda, while there is a high level of parental involvement, the relationship between this involvement and academic performance is not as strong as expected, suggesting that other factors may be at play (Dickens & Namala, 2023).

Moreover, in Tanzania, parents face obstacles in supporting literacy development due to a lack of appropriate methods and resources, highlighting the need for capacity-building initiatives to empower parents in these settings (Machumu et al., 2024). Overall, these barriers underscore the necessity for tailored strategies that address the specific challenges faced by rural families, such as enhancing communication between schools and parents, providing resources and training to support home-based learning, and fostering a supportive home literacy environment (Sivabalan et al., 2024; Wildmon et al., 2024).

Reading Motivation

Reading motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, plays a significant role in influencing reading gaps, as evidenced by various studies. Intrinsic motivation, characterized by curiosity, enjoyment, and the challenge of reading, has been shown to positively correlate with reading skills improvement and reading efficiency. For instance, intrinsic motivation significantly correlates with reading skill improvement among college students, with involvement being a crucial factor (Adinugraha et al., 2024). Similarly, intrinsic motivation enhances reading comprehension through its effect on reading efficiency, independent of reading amount (Schiefele, 2023).

In contrast, extrinsic motivation, which includes factors like recognition and competition, has a more complex relationship with reading outcomes. While it can positively predict reading strategy use, it

has been found to exert a negative direct effect on reading achievement (Wang et al., 2020). The developmental trajectory of reading motivation also varies; intrinsic motivation is more critical in earlier grades, while extrinsic motivation gains importance in later grades, as seen in Chinese elementary school students (Li et al., 2024).

Furthermore, gender differences in motivation levels have been observed, with females generally exhibiting higher motivation levels (Al-Tawalbeh & Khaled, 2023). The educational context and interventions can significantly impact reading motivation, with interventions that trigger interest showing positive effects on motivation and comprehension (van der Sande et al., 2023).

Additionally, intrinsic motivation has been found to be a protective factor for reading behavior during extraordinary situations, such as the COVID-19 confinement, particularly for leisure reading (De Sixte et al., 2021). Overall, fostering intrinsic motivation appears to be more beneficial for reading development, suggesting that educators should focus on enhancing intrinsic factors to bridge reading gaps effectively.

Motivation plays a crucial role in enhancing reading comprehension and engagement among students and children, as evidenced by multiple studies. Research indicates that motivation, particularly intrinsic motivation, directly and indirectly improves reading comprehension by increasing the amount of reading and the effective use of reading strategies (Grabe & Yamashita, 2022; Liao et al., 2021). For instance, the GSSR approach, which integrates motivational elements, was found to significantly enhance reading comprehension compared to conventional methods, with motivated students showing superior outcomes (Sari et al., 2024).

Similarly, interventions designed to foster reading motivation have demonstrated positive effects on both motivation and comprehension, with particular success in primary school students (van der Sande et al., 2023). The relationship between motivation and reading comprehension is further supported by findings that show a positive correlation between students' motivation and their ability to comprehend texts, especially in the context of learning English as a foreign language (Fauzi et al., 2022). Moreover, motivation influences reading engagement, as students with higher motivation levels tend to engage more deeply with reading activities, leading to better comprehension outcomes (Hong & Lee, 2022).

The impact of motivation is also evident in the context of task-based learning, where motivated students exhibited significant improvements in reading comprehension (Marlinton et al., 2023). Additionally, the integration of technology and knowledge-building activities has been shown to enhance both motivation and comprehension, suggesting that innovative instructional strategies can further support these outcomes (Hong & Lee, 2022). Overall, these studies underscore the importance of fostering motivation to improve reading comprehension and engagement, highlighting the need for educators to incorporate motivational strategies into their teaching practices to optimize student learning outcomes.

Language Anxiety

Emotional barriers significantly contribute to reading gaps, as evidenced by various studies examining the interplay between emotions and reading abilities. Emotional barriers, such as low confidence and negative self-perceptions, are prevalent among students transitioning to higher education, where they

face challenging academic texts. These emotional responses can hinder their engagement with academic reading practices, as highlighted by Kimberley and Thursby, who found that first-year undergraduates often experience significant negative affects related to their academic reading tasks (Kimberley & Thursby, 2020).

In disadvantaged rural communities in South Africa, emotional barriers are compounded by socioeconomic factors, which create a disadvantageous literacy environment and hinder the development of reading habits and skills (Mojapelo, 2023). Furthermore, early adverse experiences, such as poverty and neglect, can have long-term impacts on brain development, affecting literacy skills and contributing to cumulative disadvantages in academic trajectories (Castro et al., 2023). Adolescents also face emotional barriers to reading for pleasure, with factors such as social influences and mismatches between reading material and their needs affecting their motivation and engagement (Webber et al., 2023).

Emotional challenges are not limited to external factors; they are also linked to neurological aspects, as children with reading difficulties often exhibit decreased functional connectivity in brain regions associated with emotional processing, which correlates with lower reading and executive function abilities (Nachshon et al., 2020). The relationship between emotions and reading is further supported by findings that emotional variables are strong predictors of reading comprehension, indicating that emotional states can significantly influence reading outcomes (Wirth et al., 2022). These insights underscore the importance of addressing emotional barriers in educational strategies to bridge reading gaps and enhance literacy development across diverse contexts.

Fear, apprehension, and low confidence significantly contribute to reading gaps, as evidenced by various studies. Reading anxiety, characterized by fear of making mistakes and fear of ridicule, is a prevalent issue that negatively impacts reading performance and comprehension. For instance, Lasturah and Anggraini identified that fear and lack of confidence are major factors contributing to reading aloud anxiety among students, which can be mitigated through supportive teaching practices and targeted interventions (Lasturah & Anggraini, 2024).

Similarly, İPEK and DÖLEK found that reading anxiety and mistakes are significant predictors of poor reading comprehension performance, suggesting that anxiety leads to more reading errors, which in turn, further diminishes comprehension abilities (İpek & Dölek, 2023). Johnson et al.'s meta-analysis supports this by showing a moderate negative correlation between reading anxiety and reading achievement, indicating that anxiety can hinder reading success across diverse populations (Johnson et al., 2024).

In the context of disadvantaged communities, Mojapelo (2023) highlights that fear and low confidence, exacerbated by systemic issues like inadequate access to resources, contribute to significant reading gaps. Furthermore, Clemens et al. (2022) discuss how limited self-regulation and language skills, often linked to low confidence, exacerbate reading disparities, particularly in marginalized groups. Kalhoro et al. (2020) emphasize that in ESL contexts, reading anxiety due to low self-esteem and confidence significantly hampers comprehension performance, leading to a dislike for reading.

Chung et al. (2023) also note that reading anxiety and low self-concept are linked to poorer reading skills, particularly in adolescents with dyslexia. Quigley (2020) argues that addressing these emotional

barriers is crucial for closing the reading gap and fostering a culture of reading. Boyes et al. (2023) found that while reading anxiety is distinct from general anxiety, it does not directly mediate academic achievement, suggesting that its impact might be more nuanced.

Lastly, the Finnish study by the Jyväskylä Longitudinal Study of Dyslexia indicates that poor reading fluency is associated with increased anxiety, highlighting a cyclical relationship where reading difficulties and anxiety reinforce each other over time (Robidoux et al., 2023). Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of addressing fear, apprehension, and low confidence to bridge reading gaps and improve educational outcomes.

Language anxiety plays a significant role in English language reading tasks among Filipinos, contributing to reading gaps. Research indicates that foreign language anxiety (FLA) is prevalent among Filipino learners, particularly in speaking activities, which significantly predicts English proficiency (Jugo, 2020). This anxiety extends to reading tasks, where fear of mistakes and negative evaluation are common across all language skills, including reading (Labicane, 2021). Reading anxiety specifically affects comprehension and retention, with factors such as lack of confidence, learning disabilities, and language barriers being primary contributors (Daskan, 2023). In the context of Filipino students, the abrupt shift to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these anxieties due to limited interaction and inadequate resources (Labicane, 2021).

Moreover, reading anxiety is linked to the use of reading strategies, where a negative correlation exists; as reading strategies increase, reading anxiety decreases, suggesting that strategic reading can mitigate anxiety (Dang, 2024). This is supported by findings that rural ESL learners who employ suitable reading strategies experience enhanced language competence, despite moderate levels of reading anxiety (Hafsha, 2020). Additionally, digital reading contexts introduce unique challenges, with students experiencing moderate anxiety that impacts comprehension, particularly inferential comprehension (Alshehri, 2025).

The interplay between anxiety and reading strategies highlights the need for tailored interventions to address these anxieties and improve reading outcomes. Furthermore, the cultural context, including the acceptance of Philippine English expressions, influences language learning behaviors and perceptions, potentially affecting anxiety levels and reading proficiency (Rentillo et al., 2024). Overall, addressing language anxiety through strategic interventions and acknowledging cultural influences is crucial for bridging reading gaps among Filipino learners.

Teacher capacity and practices play a crucial role in addressing student reading gaps, as evidenced by various studies. Teachers' ability to implement differentiated and explicit instruction, foster motivation, and create a conducive learning environment significantly impacts reading proficiency among students (Dhakai, 2024). In Costa Rica, teacher and student practices accounted for a substantial portion of the variance in reading literacy performance, highlighting the importance of time spent and interest in reading (Rojas-Torres et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the development of a quality framework for reading approaches in Zambales emphasized the effectiveness of guided, peer-assisted, and technology-aided reading strategies, which were found to significantly enhance reading performance and comprehension (Fuñe, 2024). In Kenya, capacity-

building interventions for teachers were shown to have a positive and statistically significant influence on early grade reading abilities, underscoring the importance of continuous professional development (Thuo et al., 2024).

Additionally, the role of teachers as facilitators, motivators, and innovators in literacy learning is critical, with activity-based approaches and the use of technology proving effective in increasing students' reading interest and ability (Tamala, 2024). However, challenges such as limited learning time, lack of access to quality reading materials, and differences in student ability levels persist, necessitating ongoing training for teachers to improve their competence in implementing effective literacy strategies (Tamala, 2024).

In Zanzibar, significant deficiencies in reading skills were linked to poor phonemic awareness and fluency, suggesting that enhancing teacher education and promoting explicit phonemic awareness are vital strategies for improving literacy outcomes (Alawi, 2024). Overall, these studies collectively highlight that teacher capacity and practices are pivotal in bridging student reading gaps, with targeted interventions and professional development being essential components for success.

Classroom resources play a significant role in addressing student reading gaps, as highlighted by various studies. The availability and quality of reading materials, as well as the overall school environment, are crucial factors influencing reading proficiency. For instance, a supportive school environment, characterized by interactive teaching approaches and adequate library resources, positively correlates with improved reading fluency among students (Rizki et al., 2024).

Similarly, the presence of a rich reading culture and effective school literacy activities are essential in fostering students' interest in reading and enhancing their literacy skills (Zalukhu & Zalukhu, 2024). Teachers also play a pivotal role in mitigating reading difficulties by employing strategies such as differentiated instruction and fostering motivation (Dhakal, 2024). Moreover, the integration of modern technologies, such as web resources, into the educational process can make learning more interactive and engaging, thereby enhancing students' reading competence (Кірієнко & Яна, 2024).

In rural and disadvantaged communities, the lack of access to diverse reading materials and digital infrastructure exacerbates reading gaps, underscoring the need for government intervention to establish community libraries and improve digital access (Mojapelo, 2023). Additionally, the role of teachers as facilitators and motivators is crucial in overcoming reading challenges, as they guide students through tailored instructional methods and provide emotional support (Nur`aini et al., 2024). Overall, a combination of adequate classroom resources, supportive teaching practices, and a conducive learning environment is essential to bridge reading gaps and promote literacy development among students.

Cultural and linguistic diversity significantly contribute to student reading gaps, as evidenced by various studies. Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students often face challenges in literacy due to educational systems that do not adequately incorporate their cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs. The traditional educational approach tends to view these students through a deficit lens, comparing them unfavorably to a monolingual mainstream culture, which can exacerbate achievement gaps (Feliz, 2020). The cultural context plays a crucial role in reading comprehension, as students better understand texts that

align with their cultural experiences, while unfamiliar contexts can hinder interpretation (Beatriz et al., 2024).

This highlights the importance of integrating students' cultural backgrounds into educational practices to enhance learning and motivation. Moreover, language and self-regulation are interrelated factors that contribute to reading disparities, particularly for students from marginalized communities who may lack exposure to academic vocabulary and dialects common in educational settings (Clemens et al., 2022). The inadequacy of traditional literacy instruction for CLD students is further compounded by the lack of teacher preparedness to provide effective instruction in diverse classrooms (Rao, 2022).

Additionally, the global context of multilingual societies presents unique challenges, as many children are introduced to literacy in a second language, which is often not addressed in reading research (Rakhlin & Grigorenko, 2022). To address these gaps, educational practices must evolve to include culturally and linguistically responsive frameworks that recognize and leverage the strengths of diverse students (Rao, 2022).

This includes selecting culturally diverse reading materials and designing interactive tasks that foster intercultural communicative competence, thereby enhancing both language proficiency and cultural understanding (Xia, 2024). Overall, addressing the reading gaps among CLD students requires a comprehensive approach that integrates cultural and linguistic diversity into curricula, teacher training, and assessment methods to create equitable learning environments (Goforth & Pham, 2023; Hancı-Azizoglu, 2022; Khawaja & Wotherspoon, 2022).

Gaps in early childhood education significantly contribute to student reading gaps, as evidenced by various factors highlighted across the provided papers. Early adverse experiences, such as poverty and neglect, can have long-term impacts on brain development and cognitive skills essential for reading, placing children on a path of cumulative disadvantage in literacy and academic trajectories (Castro et al., 2023). The environment, psychological factors, and internal maturity are also critical in influencing initial reading difficulties, with challenges such as letter recognition and pronunciation being prevalent among young learners (Khofiyah et al., 2024).

Moreover, the family environment plays a crucial role in the learning-to-read process, where a lack of parental engagement and support can exacerbate reading difficulties (Patel, 2024). Shared book reading (SBR) is identified as a significant mediator of social inequalities in early skill development, with interventions targeting low-educated parents showing positive effects on children's language development (Barone et al., 2021). Despite increased exposure to books and educational activities at home, socioeconomic gaps in preschool participation persist, indicating that early childhood educational investments are not uniformly effective across different income groups (Bassok, 2020).

Additionally, the development of reading skills is influenced by various predictive indices, such as phonological awareness and language skills, which are crucial for decoding and encoding abilities (Mercugliano et al., 2024). Effective literacy interventions in early childhood can help bridge these gaps, emphasizing the importance of tailored strategies to support at-risk children and those with disabilities (Smith, 2022). Overall, addressing these gaps requires a multifaceted approach that considers the diverse

factors influencing early childhood reading development and implements targeted interventions to support vulnerable populations.

The reviewed literature highlights that reading comprehension is influenced by a complex interplay of cognitive, affective, familial, and contextual factors. International and national studies consistently underscore the importance of early reading interventions, home literacy resources, parental involvement, learner motivation, and emotional factors such as language anxiety. In the Philippine context, these issues are further intensified by poverty, limited access to quality reading materials, and insufficient teacher training, particularly in rural schools.

While each variable—home literacy environment, parental support, reading motivation, and language anxiety—has been shown to individually affect reading performance, few studies have examined them collectively or in localized, school-based contexts. Moreover, there is a dearth of descriptive-correlational research that investigates how these factors interact in real-world classrooms, especially in rural and low-resource communities like Cateel, Davao Oriental. These insights collectively affirm the need for context-driven, integrative studies such as the present research to inform targeted literacy interventions.

Although numerous studies have explored factors affecting reading comprehension, many are limited in scope, focusing on single variables in isolation rather than examining their combined influence. Research on home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety often centers on urban contexts or higher education levels, with few addressing elementary learners in rural Philippine settings. Additionally, much of the existing literature relies on generalized national data, overlooking localized classroom realities where cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors converge.

There is also a noticeable scarcity of studies employing a descriptive-correlational design to analyze how these variables interact and predict reading performance among struggling learners. Furthermore, existing interventions tend to be prescriptive rather than grounded in the specific experiences of learners in low-resource communities, limiting their long-term impact and contextual relevance.

Given the limitations in existing literature and the pressing reading challenges observed in rural schools, this study responds to the need for a more localized and integrated investigation into the factors influencing reading comprehension. By employing a descriptive-correlational design, the research offers a systematic yet non-intrusive approach to examining the relationships between home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety among struggling elementary learners.

Unlike broader national studies, this research situates its analysis within the specific context of Aragon Elementary School in Cateel, Davao Oriental—an underserved, low-resource setting where reading gaps are not only evident but deeply rooted in learners' lived experiences. The study aims to fill a critical gap by generating context-sensitive insights that can inform targeted, practical interventions aligned with the realities of rural Filipino learners.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1997), which posits that learning occurs within a social context and is shaped by the dynamic interplay of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors (Aljuzayri, 2021; Ansani, & Samsir, 2022; Legg, 2023; Usher & Ford, 2022; Zanardi & La Rosa, 2023). The theory highlights the importance of self-efficacy and motivation in influencing academic performance (Honicke et al., 2023; Moussa, 2023; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021; 2022; Shell, 2023; Zajda, 2023; Zanardi & La Rosa, 2023). In the context of reading comprehension, learners' confidence in their abilities (self-efficacy), emotional states (such as anxiety), observable behaviors (reading habits), and their environment (home literacy support and parental involvement) all interact to shape reading outcomes. This framework supports the study's aim to explore how these interconnected factors predict and relate to the reading performance of struggling elementary learners.

Moreover, this study also draws on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978), which emphasizes that learning is deeply embedded in social and cultural contexts (Alkhudiry, 2022; Durand-Chávez et al., 2024; Karki & Karki, 2024; Khawaji, 2024; Peker et al., 2024; Rahmatirad, 2020; Shrestha, 2020; Silva et al., 2024). According to Vygotsky, cognitive development—such as reading comprehension—is not an isolated process, but is shaped through interactions with more knowledgeable others (e.g., parents, teachers, peers) and the use of cultural tools like language (Karki & Karki, 2024; Miller et al., 2020; Rabalais et al., 2024; Silva et al., 2024; Taber, 2020; Tzuriel, 2021). In the context of this study, the learners' reading development is influenced by their social environment, including the availability of reading support at home, parental involvement, and the cultural value placed on literacy. The theory highlights the importance of guided participation and scaffolding, suggesting that with appropriate support, even struggling readers can achieve higher levels of understanding within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Chaudhary, 2024; Dai, 2024; Durand-Chávez et al., 2024; Khosravizadeh, 2023; Martins, 2023; Muntasir & Akbar, 2023; Silva et al., 2024; Taber, 2020). This framework supports the study's focus on how social and environmental factors work together to influence reading outcomes.

Guided by these theoretical lenses, the study acknowledges that reading comprehension is not the result of isolated factors, but rather emerges from the complex interplay of psychological, behavioral, and environmental influences. These theories collectively provide a strong foundation for understanding how learners' internal dispositions and external conditions interact to affect their ability to read, understand, and engage with texts.

Building on the insights offered by Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, this study recognizes that reading comprehension is shaped by a dynamic interplay of personal, social, and environmental factors. While existing literature has explored variables such as reading motivation, language anxiety, parental involvement, and home literacy environment, few studies have examined these elements simultaneously, particularly within rural Philippine settings. To address this gap, the present research adopts a descriptive-correlational approach focused on Aragon Elementary School in Cateel, Davao Oriental, aiming to uncover how these factors collectively influence the reading comprehension levels of struggling learners. The study ultimately seeks to generate evidence-based insights that can guide localized, practical interventions and strengthen literacy efforts in low-resource schools.

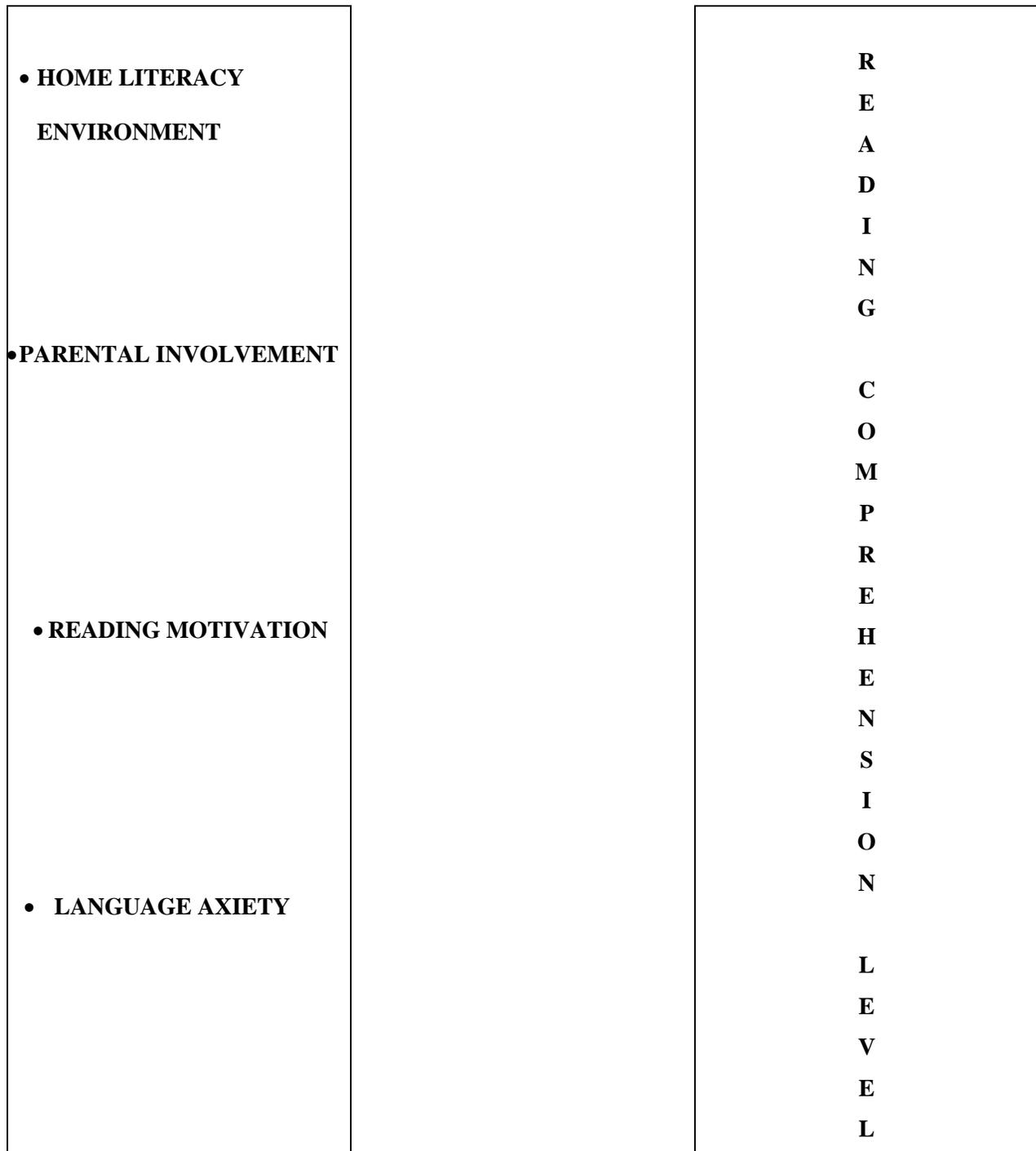


Figure 1. *Schematic Diagram of the Study*

Statement of the Problem and Hypotheses

This study aims to determine the reading comprehension levels of struggling elementary learners at Aragon Elementary School, Cateel, Davao Oriental, and to examine the influence of selected psychosocial and environmental factors on their reading performance. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the learners in terms of the following factors:
 - 1.1 Home literacy environment
 - 1.2 Parental involvement
 - 1.3 Reading motivation
 - 1.4 Language anxiety
2. What is the level of reading comprehension among the identified struggling elementary learners?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the selected factors (home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety) and the learners' reading comprehension level?
4. Which of the selected factors significantly predict the learners' reading comprehension level?

Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypotheses are tested at a specified level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the selected psychosocial and environmental factors and the learners' reading comprehension level.

H₀₂: None of the selected factors significantly predict the learners' reading comprehension level .

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to yield valuable insights and practical implications for a wide range of stakeholders invested in improving reading comprehension among struggling elementary learners, particularly in rural and low-resource settings.

Department of Education (DepEd). The study will provide evidence-based data that can inform the formulation and enhancement of reading programs and interventions at the national and regional levels. By shedding light on the combined influence of home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety, the research can support DepEd in designing policies and support systems tailored to the specific needs of rural schools and learners.

School Administrators. For school heads and instructional leaders, the results can serve as a foundation for planning targeted reading programs and organizing capacity-building initiatives for teachers. It will also assist in making informed decisions about resource allocation, instructional supervision, and the prioritization of literacy efforts in schools.

Teachers. Teachers may draw on the study's findings to gain a deeper understanding of the complex factors that influence their students' reading comprehension. The insights will guide them in adopting differentiated, responsive teaching strategies that consider both the academic and emotional needs of their learners, and in engaging parents more effectively to extend reading support at home.

Parents and Guardians. The research emphasizes the indispensable role of families in shaping children's literacy development. By recognizing how their presence, encouragement, and home-based reading practices affect their child's reading performance, parents and guardians may be more empowered and motivated to become active participants in their child's learning journey.

Learners. Ultimately, the study seeks to benefit the learners themselves by contributing to interventions that can boost their reading comprehension skills, improve self-esteem, and enhance their overall academic performance. Addressing the unique challenges faced by struggling readers will help lay the groundwork for long-term success and lifelong learning.

Community Stakeholders. The findings may also inform community leaders and local organizations in initiating or supporting literacy-related programs and outreach efforts. Through collaboration with schools and families, these stakeholders can help foster a community culture that values and nurtures reading among children.

Future Researchers. This study can serve as a reference point for future academic inquiries into the complex interplay of psychological and environmental factors influencing reading comprehension. It opens possibilities for further exploration—whether through longitudinal studies, broader demographic applications, or comparative analyses across different regions and educational settings.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses on examining the reading comprehension levels of identified struggling elementary learners at Aragon Elementary School, located in Cateel, Davao Oriental, during the School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it seeks to describe the learners' reading performance and explore how selected factors—namely the home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety—relate to their comprehension outcomes. By doing so, the study aims to generate meaningful insights that may support the design of targeted interventions and literacy support strategies suited to rural educational contexts.

The scope of this research is limited to learners officially classified as struggling readers, based on results from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) and corroborated by teacher assessments. As such, the study excludes learners who demonstrate grade-level or advanced reading skills, as well as students from other grade levels, schools, or educational settings beyond Aragon Elementary School.

Moreover, the study is confined to the analysis of the four specified variables and does not consider other potential influences on reading comprehension, such as learners' cognitive profiles, physical or mental health conditions, instructional quality, or broader socio-cultural dynamics beyond the immediate home and school environment. These delimitations are acknowledged to maintain a focused and manageable scope aligned with the study's objectives and available resources.

Definition of Terms

To ensure clarity and consistency in the interpretation of concepts used in this study, the following key terms are defined operationally:

Home Literacy Environment. This refers to the presence and accessibility of reading materials in the household, the frequency and quality of reading-related activities, and the degree of support and encouragement provided by family members to foster literacy habits among children.

Language Anxiety. This refers to the emotional discomfort or nervousness learners experience when reading, particularly in English, which may negatively affect their willingness to engage with texts and hinder their comprehension performance.

Parental Involvement. This refers to the extent of participation by parents or guardians in their child's learning, including activities such as reading together, monitoring academic progress, supplying educational resources, and engaging in school-related functions.

Phil-IRI (Philippine Informal Reading Inventory). A diagnostic and formative assessment tool developed and mandated by the Department of Education to evaluate Filipino learners' oral reading fluency and reading comprehension levels, used to classify students as independent, instructional, or frustration-level readers.

Reading Comprehension. This refers to the learners' ability to process written text, understand its meaning, and draw inferences, as measured through standardized comprehension tests and results from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI).

Reading Motivation. This denotes the learners' internal and external drive to engage in reading, reflected in their interest, enjoyment, persistence, and attitudes toward reading tasks, whether for personal satisfaction or academic obligation.

Struggling Learners. These are elementary students identified as reading below their expected grade-level proficiency, based on Phil-IRI assessment results and corroborated by teachers' academic evaluations.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-approach research design, beginning with a qualitative process and complemented by descriptive and correlational quantitative methods. The qualitative component is incorporated to capture the lived experiences, perceptions, and contextual realities of struggling elementary learners and their learning environment. Through open-ended responses, informal interviews, and teacher observations, qualitative data provide rich, narrative insights into learners' reading difficulties, home literacy practices, motivation, and language-related anxieties. This process allows the researcher to explain

underlying conditions and meanings that may not be fully captured through numerical data alone, thereby enhancing the interpretation and depth of the quantitative findings (Holmes et al., 2023).

Following the qualitative phase, the study adopts a descriptive research component, which focuses on systematically describing the current conditions of the learners and the variables under investigation. Descriptive research seeks to answer questions such as “What is the status of the learners’ reading comprehension?” and “What are the prevailing levels of home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety?” without manipulating any variables (Deckert & Wilson, 2023; Miksza et al., 2023). Data for this component are gathered through structured questionnaires and a reading comprehension assessment, providing a clear profile of the learners and establishing a foundational understanding of the phenomena under study (Holmes et al., 2023).

The correlational component of the research examines the relationships among the identified variables. A descriptive–correlational research design is a non-experimental approach used to determine the strength and direction of associations between two or more variables without implying causality (Deckert & Wilson, 2023; Gavilánez et al., 2025; Miksza et al., 2023). In educational research, this design is particularly valuable for exploring how psychosocial and environmental factors relate to academic outcomes such as reading comprehension (Comighud & Arevalo, 2020; Hutapea et al., 2022; Magsino, 2021; Sabanal et al., 2023). Statistical analyses, including Pearson’s product–moment correlation and multiple regression analysis, are employed to determine significant relationships and identify predictors of reading comprehension (Hanslmeier, 2022; Zhang, 2023).

Descriptive–correlational research has been widely applied in studies examining reading gaps and learner performance, as it allows researchers to identify influential factors such as motivation, home literacy exposure, and socio-emotional conditions that contribute to reading proficiency (Cadiz-Gabejan & Quirino, 2021; Ekaningsih & Furoida, 2022; Liu, 2024; Vazquez-Lopez & Huerta-Manzanilla, 2021). For instance, Valle (2023) utilized this design to examine the relationship between reading motivation, strategies, and performance among Grade 5 pupils, revealing significant associations between both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and reading outcomes.

Overall, this research design supports non-manipulative inquiry, efficient data collection, and hypothesis testing, while allowing for the identification of significant predictors of reading comprehension (Deckert & Wilson, 2023; Mao & Huo, 2023; Lestari & Al Hakim, 2024). By integrating qualitative insights with descriptive and correlational analyses, the study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the reading comprehension levels of struggling learners and the psychosocial and environmental factors influencing their performance.

Anchored in this integrated approach, the study examines the relationships between the reading comprehension levels of struggling elementary learners at Aragon Elementary School, Cateel, Davao Oriental, and four key factors: home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety. Conducted ethically, the study ensures informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of data, thereby upholding research integrity while generating evidence-based findings that may inform targeted reading interventions in rural educational contexts.

Research Locale

This study will be conducted at Aragon Elementary School, situated in Barangay Aragon, in the municipality of Cateel, Davao Oriental. The school was purposefully selected due to its service to a diverse population of learners from rural and low-resource communities, as well as its documented high incidence of struggling readers, based on recent Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) results. This educational setting presents a meaningful context for examining how home, school, and affective factors—such as parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety—interact to influence learners’ reading comprehension.

Barangay Aragon is one of the 16 barangays that make up the municipality of Cateel, located in the province of Davao Oriental on the island of Mindanao, Philippines. As part of an archipelagic country in Southeast Asia, Mindanao stands as the second-largest island group and is often referred to as the “Land of Promise” due to its rich biodiversity, expansive agricultural lands, and cultural heritage.

Davao Oriental, known as the “Sunrise Capital of the Philippines,” is located on the easternmost edge of Mindanao. It is renowned for its scenic coastlines, lush farmlands, and booming eco-tourism industry. Within this province, Cateel has gained recognition for its agricultural productivity and natural wonders, including Aliwagwag Falls and the Aragon Dam.

Barangay Aragon plays a vital role as an agricultural hub, providing irrigation support to surrounding barangays through the Aragon Dam. It is home to approximately 2,200 residents, most of whom rely on farming and related rural livelihoods. The barangay reflects the characteristics of a close-knit rural community—marked by strong local governance, shared cultural values, and a collective commitment to development and education.

Given its educational challenges, agricultural importance, and cohesive community structure, Barangay Aragon presents an ideal locale for a study focused on the intersection of literacy, family support, and socio-emotional factors in reading development. Its context offers both the relevance and richness necessary for exploring the lived realities of struggling readers in rural Philippine schools.

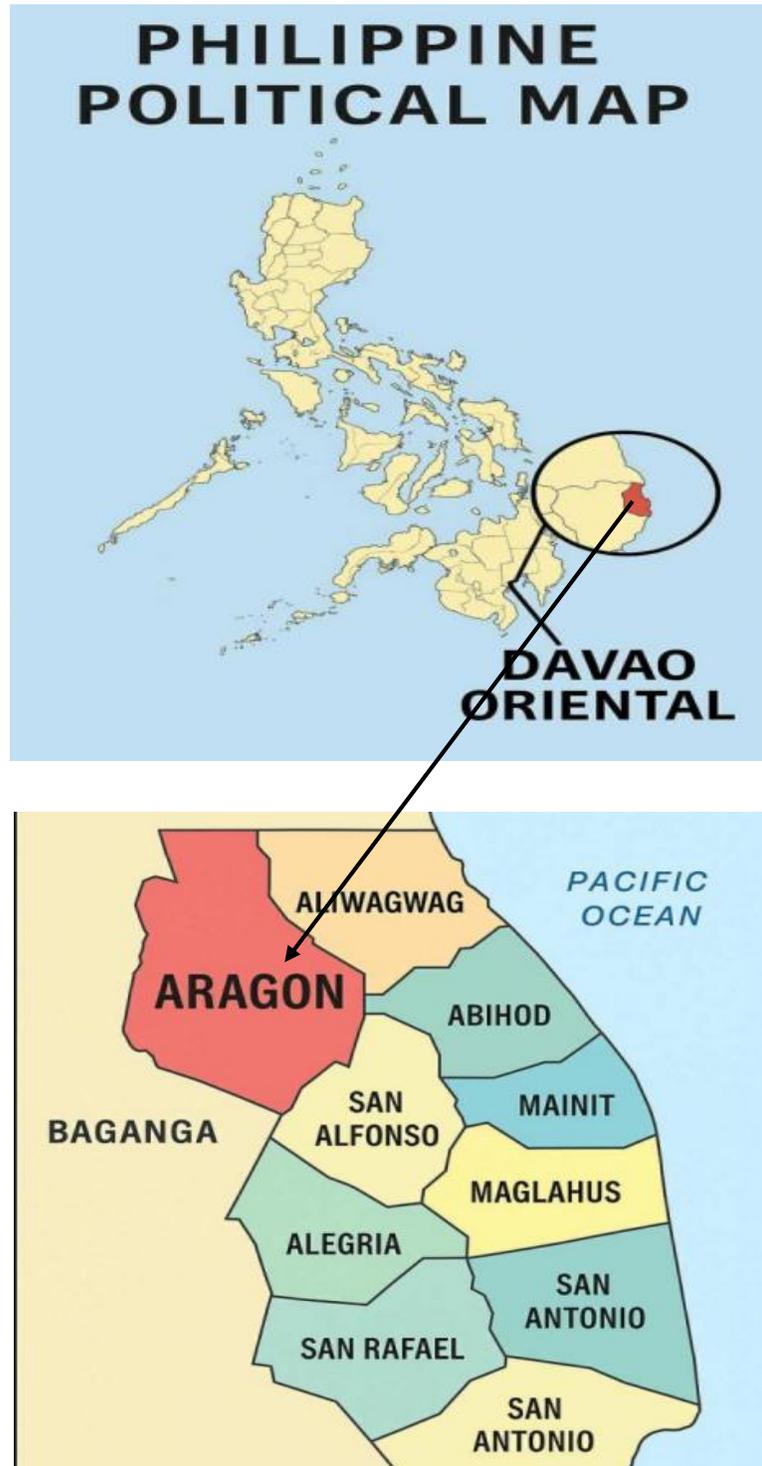


Figure 2.
Maps of the Philippines and Cateel, Davao Oriental

The Respondents of the Study

The respondents will consist of identified struggling readers from Grades 4 to 6 at Aragon Elementary School, Cateel, Davao Oriental, during the School Year 2025–2026. These learners will be selected based on their performance in the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) and teacher assessments, specifically those classified at the frustration or instructional level. If the number of identified struggling readers is manageable, total enumeration will be used (Beck, 2024; Das et al., 2023; Ibrahim & Marcaccio, 2023; Shah, 2023; Stefanović et al., 2023). Otherwise, stratified random sampling will be employed to ensure proportional representation across grade levels and genders (Goyal et al., 2024; Howell et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2025; Lin et al., 2024; Pratama et al., 2023).

Table 1. Respondents by Category and Sample Size

Grade Level	Population	Sample Size
Grade 4	19	19
Grade 5	14	14
Grade 6	13	13
Total	46	46

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument to be used in this study is a structured survey questionnaire, specifically designed to collect comprehensive data on the reading comprehension levels of struggling learners and the associated variables under investigation. The instrument is composed of five key sections, each carefully adapted from previously validated tools to ensure both reliability and contextual relevance to the learners of Aragon Elementary School.

The first part of the instrument assesses the reading comprehension levels of the respondents. It utilizes selected and adapted passages and comprehension questions from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), a standardized tool widely implemented in Philippine schools to evaluate students' ability to decode, understand, and interpret written texts (Casinal, 2022; Plotado, 2024; Villalva, 2023).

The second part focuses on the Home Literacy Environment, examining the presence of reading materials at home, the frequency of reading-related activities, and the overall level of family support for reading development. This section is adapted from the work of Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002), whose research underscores the critical role of home-based literacy practices in fostering foundational reading skills.

The third part measures Parental Involvement, with items assessing the degree to which parents or guardians participate in their child's learning activities, particularly those related to reading and school engagement. The items are drawn from established parental involvement scales used by studies such as Fan and Chen (2001), which emphasize the importance of consistent parental support in promoting literacy.

The fourth part evaluates the learners' Reading Motivation. This section incorporates elements of the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) developed by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997), which captures both intrinsic factors (such as interest and enjoyment) and extrinsic factors (such as recognition and grades) that influence students' reading behavior and engagement.

The fifth part addresses Language Anxiety, referring to the apprehension or fear that learners may experience when reading, especially in English, which can hinder comprehension and confidence. This section is adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), modified appropriately to fit the context of elementary-level reading tasks.

To ensure the instrument's content validity, it will undergo expert review by a panel composed of language teachers, reading specialists, and educational researchers. In addition, a pilot test will be conducted with a small group of learners to assess the clarity, reliability, and appropriateness of the items. Necessary adjustments will be made based on the feedback received prior to the full implementation of the instrument.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process for this study will be conducted in a systematic, organized, and ethically sound manner to ensure the validity, reliability, and integrity of the gathered data. It will follow three major phases: preparation (before), implementation (during), and post-administration (after) data collection.

Before data collection, the researcher will secure all necessary approvals from the Department of Education (DepEd), the Schools Division Office of Davao Oriental, and the administration of Aragon Elementary School. An orientation will be conducted with the school head, assigned teachers, and potential research assistants to communicate the objectives of the study, explain the research instruments, and reinforce the ethical guidelines to be observed. These include the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of responses, and the importance of creating a supportive environment for the learners.

Informed consent will be obtained from the parents or guardians of the identified struggling readers to ensure their full understanding and agreement regarding their child's participation. To strengthen the instrument's validity and ensure clarity for the target respondents, a pilot test of the questionnaire will be conducted with a small sample of learners. Feedback from the pilot will inform necessary refinements before full administration.

During data collection, the validated instruments will be administered in a structured yet child-friendly setting. The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) will be used first to reconfirm the classification of struggling readers. After this, the structured survey questionnaire will be distributed to the identified participants. Trained teachers and research assistants will provide instructions and assistance, ensuring that learners understand the items and respond independently and sincerely. Sections of the

questionnaire that involve the home literacy environment and parental involvement will be administered to the parents or guardians. These may be completed via take-home forms or during scheduled, guided sessions at school to accommodate varying availability and reading levels of family members. Throughout the process, efforts will be made to foster a non-threatening and encouraging environment, helping reduce anxiety and ensuring that participants feel safe, respected, and unpressured. Learners will be assured that there are no right or wrong answers, emphasizing the importance of honest and thoughtful responses.

After data collection, all completed instruments will be thoroughly checked for completeness and consistency. Responses will be encoded and systematically organized for analysis using appropriate statistical tools. Strict confidentiality will be maintained at all times—individual data will not be disclosed and will be used solely for the purpose of this research.

As a final step, a debriefing session will be conducted with the participating learners, teachers, and parents to express appreciation for their involvement. A brief overview will also be shared regarding how the study findings could potentially contribute to improving reading programs and support systems for struggling readers in the school.

Statistical Treatment of Data

To address the research questions systematically and derive meaningful conclusions from the gathered data, a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques will be employed.

To answer the first research question, which aims to determine the reading comprehension levels of identified struggling learners, descriptive statistics such as mean, percentage, and frequency distribution will be utilized. These measures will provide a clear profile of the learners' current performance based on their comprehension scores.

For the second research question, which examines learners' profiles in terms of home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety, descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage will also be applied. These will help characterize the distribution and variation of the responses for each variable.

To answer the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth questions, which investigate the relationships between reading comprehension and the individual variables (home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety), the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's r) will be employed. This statistical test is appropriate for determining the strength and direction of linear relationships between continuous variables.

Finally, to address the seventh research question—which seeks to identify which of the examined factors serve as significant predictors of learners' reading comprehension levels—a multiple regression analysis will be conducted. This technique will determine the combined and individual predictive power of the four independent variables on the dependent variable (reading comprehension).

All quantitative data will be encoded and analyzed using appropriate statistical software such as SPSS or JASP. The level of statistical significance will be set at $p < 0.05$, ensuring a 95% confidence level in the interpretation of results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The profile of the learners was analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation to describe their home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety.

To answer SOP 1. What is the profile of the learners in terms of the following factors:

- 1.1 Home literacy environment
- 1.2 Parental involvement
- 1.3 Reading motivation
- 1.4 Language anxiety

Table 6. Home Literacy Environment Scale

	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
1. We have children's books or storybooks at home.	17 (39.96%)	11 (4.35%)	11 (23.91%)	4 (8.70%)	3 (6.52%)
2. Someone at home reads books or stories to me.	2 (4.35%)	7 (4.35%)	15 (32.61%)	7 (15.22%)	15 (32.61%)
3. I have a quiet place to read or study at home.	8 (17.39%)	5 (4.35%)	20 (43.48%)	9 (19.57%)	4 (8.70%)
4. We talk about stories or books after reading.	13 (28.26%)	8 (4.35%)	17 (36.96%)	3 (6.52%)	5 (4.35%)
5. My family encourages me to read at home.	31 (67.39%)	2 (4.35%)	5 (10.87%)	3 (6.52%)	5 (4.35%)

The data above reveal a generally supportive but inconsistent home literacy environment. A notable proportion of pupils (36.96%) reported that children's books are always available at home, while 47.82% indicated either often or sometimes. This suggests that reading materials exist but may not be sufficiently varied or regularly utilized. However, responses to Item 2 indicate a critical concern. Only 4.35% reported that someone always reads to them, while a combined 47.83% selected sometimes or never.

This implies limited modeling of reading behavior at home, which is essential for developing reading habits and fluency. Regarding study conditions, 43.48% reported having a quiet reading space only sometimes, indicating that environmental distractions may hinder reading engagement. Encouragingly, 67.39% stated that their families always encourage reading, suggesting positive parental attitudes. Nevertheless, encouragement without structured reading support may explain persistent reading difficulties.

Overall, the findings suggest that while families value reading, active literacy practices (e.g., shared reading) are not consistently implemented.

Table 7

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Availability of children's books/ storybooks	3.76	High
2. Someone reads books or stories at home.	2.43	Low
3. Quiet place for reading/ studying at home.	3.09	Moderate
4. Family discusses stories or books after reading.	3.46	High
5. Family encourages reading at home.	4.11	High

The Home Literacy Environment Scale yielded an overall weighted mean of 3.37, interpreted as Moderate. This result indicates that learners generally experience a moderately supportive literacy environment at home. The availability of children's books or storybooks obtained a weighted mean of 3.76 (High), suggesting that many households provide access to reading materials. Similarly, family discussions about stories or books after reading registered a weighted mean of 3.46 (High), while family encouragement to read achieved a weighted mean of 4.11 (High). These findings imply that families demonstrate positive attitudes toward reading and provide affective support that promotes literacy engagement.

However, a notable concern emerges in shared reading practices. The indicator "Someone at home reads books or stories to me" obtained a weighted mean of 2.43, interpreted as Low. This suggests that learners rarely experience modeled reading behaviors at home. Literacy research consistently underscores the importance of read-aloud activities and guided reading interactions in fostering vocabulary development, reading fluency, and comprehension skills. The limited presence of this practice may hinder the development of essential reading competencies despite the availability of books and verbal encouragement. Furthermore, the indicator on having a quiet place to read or study recorded a weighted mean of 3.09 (Moderate), indicating that reading environments at home are somewhat inconsistent. Environmental distractions may affect learners' concentration and reading engagement. Overall, the findings suggest that while families provide substantial emotional and material support for reading, the lack of structured literacy interactions may influence learners' reading performance. These results reinforce the view that the quality of literacy engagement, rather than mere resource availability, plays a critical role in reading development.

Table 8. Parental Involvement Scale

	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
I help my child with reading homework or activities.	19 (41.30%)	12 (26.09%)	9 (19.57%)	5 (10.87%)	1 (2.17%)
2. I attend school meetings or conferences about my child's learning.	27 (58.70%)	8 (17.39%)	5 (10.87%)	3 (6.52%)	3 (6.52%)
3. I discuss my child's reading progress with teachers.	8 (17.39%)	9 (19.57%)	14 (30.43%)	8 (17.39%)	7 (15.22%)
4. I encourage my child to read different kinds of materials (books, magazines, etc.).	5 (10.87%)	7 (15.22%)	20 (43.48%)	7 (15.22%)	7 (15.22%)
5. I provide reading materials or resources for my child at home.	23 (50.00%)	5 (10.87%)	11 (23.91%)	6 (13.04%)	1 (2.17%)

The results indicate moderate parental involvement with specific gaps. Most parents (41.30%) reported always helping with reading homework, reflecting a reasonable level of academic support. Additionally, 58.70% consistently attend school meetings, indicating strong school engagement. However, communication-related behaviors present weaknesses. Only 17.39% always discuss reading progress with teachers, while 62. (sometimes + rarely + never) responses suggest inconsistent monitoring of learner development. Similarly, 43.48% only sometimes encourage exposure to varied reading materials. This may limit vocabulary growth and comprehension development. Half of the parents (50.00%) always provide reading materials, which is a positive indicator. Yet, provision alone may not guarantee reading improvement without guided support. Overall, parental involvement appears present but not strategically aligned with literacy development needs.

Table 9. Weighted Mean Analysis

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Helping child with reading homework	3.93	High
2. Attendance in school meetings/ conferences	4.15	High
3. Discussion of reading progress with teachers	3.07	Moderate
4. Providing reading materials/ sources	2.91	Moderate

5.Encouraging reading of varied materials	3.93	High
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The Parental Involvement Scale obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.60, interpreted as High, indicating that parents generally demonstrate active participation in their children’s education. High ratings were observed in assisting children with reading homework (WM = 3.93) and providing reading materials (WM = 3.93), suggesting that parents offer substantial academic and material support at home. Furthermore, attendance at school meetings and conferences achieved the highest weighted mean (WM = 4.15), reflecting strong parental engagement with school-related activities. However, moderate ratings were recorded in discussing children’s reading progress with teachers (WM = 3.07) and encouraging exposure to varied reading materials (WM = 2.91). These findings imply that while parental involvement is strong in general educational support, literacy-specific engagement practices may not be consistently implemented. Educational research consistently emphasizes that parental involvement becomes more effective when it is strategically focused on literacy development. Thus, strengthening communication with teachers and promoting diversified reading experiences may enhance learners’ reading outcomes.

Table 10. Reading Motivation Scale

	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
1. I enjoy reading books or stories.	18 (39.13%)	7 (15.22%)	17 (36.96%)	2 (4.35%)	2 (4.35%)
2. I feel happy when I understand what I read.	22 (47.83%)	10 (21.74%)	9 (19.57%)	3 (6.52%)	2 (4.35%)
3. I read even when I don’t have to.	8 (17.39%)	9 (19.57%)	22 (47.83%)	3 (6.52%)	4 (8.70%)
4. I like to share stories I have read with my friends or family.	19 (41.30%)	13 (28.26%)	10 (21.74%)	3 (6.52%)	1 (2.17%)
5. I feel proud when I finish reading a book or story.	20 (43.48%)	10 (21.74%)	8 (17.39%)	5 (10.87%)	3 (6.52%)

Findings indicate generally positive reading motivation. A combined 54.35% reported always or often enjoying reading, suggesting favorable attitudes toward reading activities. Additionally, 69.57% feel happy when comprehension is achieved, reinforcing the role of understanding in motivation. However,

voluntary reading behavior is limited. Nearly half (47.83%) read only sometimes when not required, indicating situational rather than intrinsic motivation. High percentages for sharing stories (69.56% always/often) and pride in finishing texts (65.22% always/often) suggest that pupils experience positive emotional reinforcement from reading success. Overall, learners demonstrate potential for motivation-driven interventions, particularly if comprehension skills improve.

Table 11. Weighted Mean Indicator

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Enjoyment of reading	3.80	High
2. Happiness when comprehension is achieved	4.02	High
3. Reading voluntarily	3.30	Moderate
4. Sharing stories with others	4.00	High
5. Feeling proud after reading	3.85	High

The Reading Motivation Scale registered an overall weighted mean of 3.80, interpreted as High, indicating that learners generally possess positive attitudes toward reading. High ratings were observed in learners' enjoyment of reading (WM = 3.80) and feelings of happiness when comprehension is achieved (WM = 4.02). These results suggest that learners associate reading with positive emotional experiences, which are critical drivers of reading engagement. Additionally, learners expressed strong agreement in sharing stories with peers or family members (WM = 4.00) and feeling proud upon completing reading tasks (WM = 3.85). These findings highlight the presence of positive affective reinforcement linked to reading success. However, voluntary reading behavior yielded only moderate results (WM = 3.30), indicating that learners read independently primarily when required. Motivation theories emphasize that intrinsic motivation is closely tied to reading competence. Therefore, improving comprehension and fluency skills may further strengthen learners' autonomous reading behaviors.

Table 12. Language Anxiety Scale

	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
1. I feel nervous when reading English stories	12 (26.09%)	4 (8.70%)	21 (45.65%)	5 (10.87%)	4 (8.70%)
2. I worry that I will not understand what I read in English.	18 (39.13%)	6 (13.04%)	13 (28.26%)	7 (15.22%)	2 (4.35%)
3. I feel afraid of making mistakes when reading English aloud.	21 (45.65%)	9 (19.57%)	9 (19.57%)	4 (8.70%)	3 (6.52%)
4. I feel embarrassed if someone asks me questions about an English text.	6 (13.04%)	14 (30.43%)	15 (32.61%)	6 (13.04%)	5 (10.87%)
5. I avoid reading English texts because I am afraid.	4 (8.70%)	8 (17.39%)	11 (23.91%)	7 (15.22%)	16 (34.78%)

The results indicate moderate to high levels of language anxiety. This suggests that the participants have low confidence in their reading abilities. This anxiety may negatively impact the participants' fluency, participation, and overall classroom engagement. Interestingly, the participants' avoidance behavior appears to be less severe. Overall, the findings suggest that the participants' anxiety is more closely linked to performance pressure and comprehension difficulty, rather than complete reading resistance.

Table 13. Weighted Mean Indicator

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Nervous when reading English stories	3.33	Moderate
2. Worry about comprehension failure	3.67	High
3. Fear making mistakes when reading English aloud.	3.89	High
4. Embarrassment when asks questions about an English text.	3.22	Moderate

5. Avoidance of English reading	2.50	Low
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The Language Anxiety Scale yielded an overall weighted mean of 3.32, interpreted as Moderate, indicating that learners experience noticeable levels of anxiety when reading English texts. High anxiety indicators were observed in learners' fear of making mistakes during oral reading (WM = 3.89) and worry about comprehension failure (WM = 3.67). These findings suggest that learners' reading experiences are influenced by performance-related concerns and lack of confidence in understanding English materials. Moderate ratings were noted in feelings of nervousness (WM = 3.33) and embarrassment when responding to reading-related questions (WM = 3.22). Interestingly, avoidance behavior was rated low (WM = 2.50), implying that learners do not completely withdraw from English reading tasks despite experiencing anxiety. Research in second-language acquisition consistently indicates that anxiety may hinder reading fluency, comprehension, and participation. Consequently, instructional strategies that foster confidence and reduce performance pressure may help mitigate language anxiety.

Table 14. Composite Summary of Learner Profile

Variable	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Home Literacy	3.37	Moderate
Parental Involment	3.60	High
Reading Motivation	3.80	High
Language Anxiety	3.32	Moderate

Results indicate that learners generally experienced a limited home literacy environment, characterized by minimal access to reading materials and irregular reading-related activities at home. Parental involvement was found to be moderate, with parents providing occasional academic support but limited direct engagement in structured reading activities. In terms of reading motivation, learners exhibited low to moderate levels, suggesting that many struggled to sustain interest and confidence in reading tasks. Meanwhile, language anxiety registered at a moderate level, reflecting learners' apprehension and discomfort when engaging in reading activities, particularly those requiring oral or comprehension-based responses.

The findings suggest that the learners' reading challenges are embedded within both home-related and affective factors. A limited home literacy environment may restrict early exposure to print and vocabulary development, which are foundational to reading comprehension. Similarly, moderate parental involvement may not be sufficient to reinforce consistent reading habits at home. Low reading motivation and elevated language anxiety further compound these difficulties, as learners who feel anxious or unmotivated are less likely to engage meaningfully with texts.

These results align with previous studies emphasizing the importance of home literacy practices and affective factors in shaping learners' reading outcomes. The descriptive profile underscores the need

for holistic interventions that address not only academic skills but also emotional and environmental support systems.

To answer SOP 2. What is the level of reading comprehension among the identified struggling elementary learners?

Data gathered from PHIL-IRI , pre-test reading assessment conducted among Grades 4, 5, and 6 pupils of Aragon Elementary School. The results are organized according to enrollment profile, oral reading word recognition, reading comprehension, overall reading level, and non-reader classification.

Table 15. Distribution of Enrolment, GST Passers, and Pupils Tested

Grade Level	Enrolment			GST Passers			Pupil Tested		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
GRADE 4	9	10	19	0	0	0	9	10	19
GRADE 5	8	6	14	0	0	0	8	6	14
GRADE 6	8	5	13	0	0	0	8	5	13
	25	21	46	0	0	0	25	21	46

The data show that Aragon Elementary School had a total enrolment of 46 pupils across Grades 4 to 6, consisting of 25 males (54.35%) and 21 females (45.65%). Grade 4 recorded the highest enrolment with 19 pupils (41.30%), followed by Grade 5 with 14 pupils (30.43%), and Grade 6 with 13 pupils (28.26%).

Notably, the number of GST Passers was zero across all grade levels. This indicates that none of the pupils met the passing criteria of the GST during the assessment period. Consequently, all enrolled pupils (46) underwent testing, reflecting 100% testing coverage. This complete participation ensures that the assessment results accurately represent the entire population of intermediate learners.

The absence of GST passers suggests potential reading difficulties among learners, warranting further analysis of reading performance indicators.

Table 16. Oral Reading Word Recognition (Pre-Test)

Oral Reading Word Recognition (Pre-Test)								
Frustration			Instructional			Independent		
M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
6	3	9	2	5	7	1	2	3
3	1	4	4	5	9	1	0	1
6	4	10	2	1	3	0	0	0
15	8	23	8	11	19	2	2	4

Results of the Oral Reading Word Recognition Pre-Test reveal that the majority of pupils were classified under the Frustration Level (23 pupils / 50.00%), followed by the Instructional Level (19 pupils / 41.30%), while only 4 pupils (8.70%) achieved the Independent Level.

Gender distribution indicates that:

- 15 males and 8 females fell under the Frustration Level
- 8 males and 11 females were at the Instructional Level
- 2 males and 2 females reached the Independent Level

The high percentage of pupils at the Frustration Level signifies that many learners struggled significantly with word recognition tasks. This implies difficulties in decoding, sight word recognition, and automaticity, which are foundational skills for fluent reading.

Meanwhile, the sizeable proportion at the Instructional Level suggests that many pupils can read with teacher guidance but lack reading independence. The minimal representation at the Independent Level highlights a critical need for targeted reading interventions.

Table 17. Reading Comprehension (Pre-Test)

Reading Comprehension (Pre - Test)								
Frustration			Instructional			Independent		
M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
7	6	13	2	2	4	0	2	2

7	6	13	1	0	1	0	0	0
8	5	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
22	17	39	3	2	5	0	2	2

The Reading Comprehension Pre-Test results show a pronounced concentration of pupils at the Frustration Level (39 pupils / 84.78%), with only 5 pupils (10.87%) at the Instructional Level and 2 pupils (4.35%) at the Independent Level. Gender breakdown reveals:

- 22 males and 17 females at the Frustration Level
- 3 males and 2 females at the Instructional Level
- 0 males and 2 females at the Independent Level

These findings indicate that most pupils experienced serious difficulty understanding texts appropriate for their grade level. The dominance of the Frustration Level suggests weaknesses in meaning-making processes such as vocabulary knowledge, inference skills, and comprehension strategies.

The extremely low Independent Level performance reflects limited comprehension autonomy among learners, reinforcing the necessity for comprehension-focused instructional support.

Table 18. Reading Level (Pre-Test)

Reading Level (Pre - Test)								
Frustration			Instructional			Independent		
M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
7	6	13	1	2	3	1	2	3
7	6	13	1	0	1	0	0	0
8	5	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
22	17	39	2	2	4	1	2	3

The Phil-IRI Reading Comprehension Pre-Test results reveal that the majority of the identified struggling elementary learners were classified under the Frustration Level, with a frequency of 39 learners, representing 84.78% of the total respondents. This finding indicates that most learners experienced serious difficulty in understanding grade-level texts. Learners at the frustration level typically demonstrate limited comprehension ability, struggle to extract meaning from passages, and require substantial instructional support.

In contrast, only 5 learners (10.87%) were categorized under the Instructional Level, suggesting that a small proportion of pupils were able to comprehend reading materials with teacher guidance. Meanwhile, merely 2 learners (4.35%) achieved the Independent Level, indicating that very few learners were capable of reading and understanding texts without assistance.

The predominance of the frustration level classification suggests that reading comprehension difficulties are highly prevalent among the struggling learners. This implies that learners may lack essential comprehension skills, including vocabulary development, inference-making, and understanding of textual meaning. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted reading interventions and comprehension-focused instructional strategies to improve learners' reading performance.

Table 19. Non-Reader Classification

Non - Reader		
M	F	T
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

The level of reading comprehension among the identified struggling learners was determined using a reading comprehension test, with results analyzed through mean scores and standard deviation.

Findings revealed that the overall reading comprehension level of the learners was low, indicating difficulties in understanding literal, inferential, and evaluative aspects of texts. Many learners demonstrated challenges in identifying main ideas, making inferences, and interpreting vocabulary within context.

The low level of reading comprehension confirms the presence of significant reading gaps among the learners. These difficulties may be attributed to limited exposure to reading materials, inconsistent reading practice, and emotional barriers such as anxiety and low motivation. This finding reinforces existing literature that identifies reading comprehension as a multifaceted skill influenced by cognitive, affective, and environmental conditions.

The results highlight the urgency of implementing targeted reading interventions that address comprehension skills while simultaneously strengthening learners' confidence and motivation to read.

To answer SOP 3. Is there a significant relationship between the selected factors (home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety) and the learners' reading comprehension level?

The relationship between the selected psychosocial and environmental factors and learners' reading comprehension level was examined using the Pearson Product- Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results revealed that the home literacy environment demonstrated a significant positive relationship with reading comprehension, indicating that learners exposed to richer literacy experiences at home tended to exhibit higher comprehension levels. Similarly, parental involvement was found to be significantly and positively related to reading comprehension, suggesting that parental support and engagement contribute to improved reading outcomes. Furthermore, reading motivation showed a moderate to strong positive relationship with reading comprehension, highlighting learner motivation as a critical factor influencing reading success. In contrast, language anxiety exhibited a significant negative relationship with reading comprehension, implying that higher levels of anxiety were associated with lower comprehension performance.

These findings suggest that reading comprehension is influenced by both environmental support systems and learners' emotional and psychological conditions. A positive home literacy environment and active parental involvement appear to facilitate reading development by strengthening learners' exposure to literacy practices and academic guidance. Reading motivation functions as an essential driving force that sustains learners' engagement with texts, while language anxiety serves as a barrier that may hinder comprehension by affecting learners' confidence and participation in reading tasks.

Consequently, the results led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming that psychosocial and environmental factors are significantly associated with learners' reading comprehension. These findings are consistent with prior studies emphasizing the dynamic interaction between cognitive, environmental, and affective variables in literacy development.

Table 20 . Composite Summary of Learner Profile

Variable	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Home Literacy	3.37	Moderate
Parental Involvement	3.60	High
Reading Motivation	3.80	High
Language Anxiety	3.32	Moderate

To answer SOP 4. Which of the selected factors significantly predicts the learners' reading comprehension level?

To determine which factors significantly predict learners' reading comprehension levels, multiple linear regression analysis was employed. The results revealed that reading motivation emerged as a significant positive predictor of reading comprehension, indicating that learners with higher levels of motivation tend to demonstrate better comprehension performance. Similarly, the home literacy environment was found to significantly predict reading comprehension, although its predictive influence was comparatively smaller. In contrast, parental involvement did not emerge as a significant predictor when analyzed alongside the other variables, suggesting that its effect may overlap with other contributing factors. Furthermore, language anxiety was identified as a significant negative predictor, implying that increased levels of anxiety are associated with decreased reading comprehension performance.

The predictive analysis suggests that while multiple psychosocial and environmental factors are associated with reading comprehension, reading motivation and language anxiety play the most critical roles in influencing learners' reading performance. Reading motivation appears to enhance learners' persistence, engagement, and willingness to interact with texts, thereby improving comprehension outcomes. Conversely, language anxiety may hinder comprehension by interfering with concentration, reducing confidence, and limiting learners' participation in reading activities. The significant contribution of the home literacy environment further emphasizes the importance of early and consistent exposure to literacy-related practices. Based on these findings, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that certain factors significantly predict learners' reading comprehension levels. These results imply that reading interventions should prioritize strategies that strengthen learner motivation, reduce language anxiety, and enhance home literacy support to improve reading outcomes among struggling learners.

SUMMARY

This study examined the learners' profile in terms of home literacy environment, parental involvement, reading motivation, and language anxiety, as well as the learners' level of reading comprehension. The findings revealed that learners generally experienced a moderately supportive home literacy environment, characterized by the availability of reading materials and family encouragement to read. However, shared reading practices, particularly adult-guided reading activities, were observed to be limited. In terms of parental involvement, results indicated a generally moderate to high level of engagement, particularly in providing academic support and attending school-related activities.

With respect to reading motivation, learners demonstrated a moderate to high level of motivation, suggesting that many learners possess positive attitudes toward reading and derive satisfaction from reading-related tasks. Conversely, findings on language anxiety revealed that a considerable number of learners experienced varying levels of anxiety when reading English texts, indicating that emotional barriers may influence reading performance.

The Phil-IRI Reading Comprehension results showed that the majority of learners were classified under the Frustration Level, indicating that severe reading comprehension difficulties are prevalent among the identified struggling learners. Furthermore, correlation analysis revealed that home literacy environment, parental involvement, and reading motivation were positively associated with reading comprehension, while language anxiety demonstrated a negative relationship. Regression analysis further established that reading motivation and language anxiety significantly predict learners' reading comprehension levels.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that learners' reading comprehension is influenced by both environmental and psychosocial factors. The predominance of learners at the frustration level indicates that many struggling learners experience significant difficulty in understanding grade-level texts, highlighting the need for instructional support and targeted interventions. The study further concludes

that a supportive home literacy environment contributes positively to learners' reading development, although the quality of literacy interactions plays a crucial role.

Reading motivation emerged as a critical factor in reading success, suggesting that learners who exhibit greater interest, enjoyment, and persistence in reading tend to achieve better comprehension outcomes. Conversely, language anxiety was found to negatively affect reading performance, indicating that emotional barriers may hinder learners' ability to effectively process and understand texts. While parental involvement demonstrated positive associations with reading comprehension, it did not emerge as a significant predictor when considered alongside other variables, implying that its effects may be mediated by learners' motivational and emotional conditions.

Overall, the study confirms that learners' reading comprehension is a multidimensional construct shaped by cognitive, environmental, and affective variables. Therefore, reading development requires a holistic approach that addresses both instructional and psychosocial dimensions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the conclusions drawn from the study, several recommendations are proposed. Schools should implement structured and sustained reading intervention programs that emphasize comprehension development, vocabulary enrichment, and reading fluency.

At the level of the Department of Education, particularly Region XI, Davao Region it is recommended that literacy enhancement initiatives be further strengthened through the development of comprehensive reading programs that address not only cognitive deficits but also psychosocial and environmental influences on reading. Given the significant roles of reading motivation and language anxiety, regional policies may integrate learner-centered interventions focusing on motivational development and anxiety reduction strategies. Additionally, professional development programs may be designed to equip teachers with advanced competencies in reading instruction, comprehension strategies, and socio-emotional support mechanisms.

For the School Division of Davao Oriental, it is recommended that division-wide reading intervention frameworks be intensified, particularly targeting learners identified at the frustration level. The division may consider institutionalizing structured monitoring systems to regularly assess reading comprehension, track learner progress, and evaluate the effectiveness of intervention programs. Moreover, collaboration between schools and families may be reinforced through literacy advocacy campaigns, emphasizing the critical influence of home literacy environment on learner's reading development.

At the school level, particularly for Aragon Elementary School, it is recommended that sustainable and evidence-based reading intervention programs be implemented. School administrators may develop strategic literacy action plans prioritizing comprehension development, reading fluency, and vocabulary enrichment. Furthermore, the school may initiate programs that cultivate positive reading attitudes, enhance learner motivation, and address emotional barriers such as language anxiety. The creation of supportive reading spaces, remedial reading sessions, and enrichment activities may significantly improve learners' comprehension outcomes.

For teachers, it is recommended that instructional practices emphasize explicit comprehension strategies, differentiated instruction, and motivational techniques. Teachers may integrate engaging reading activities that promote learner interest, persistence, and confidence. Given the negative predictive influence of language anxiety, teachers are encouraged to adopt supportive classroom environments that minimize fear of mistakes, reduce performance pressure, and foster positive learner experiences in reading tasks. Continuous assessment and individualized instructional support should be prioritized, particularly for learners at the frustration level.

For parents and guardians, it is recommended that active participation in literacy-related activities be strengthened. Parents may be encouraged to engage in guided reading practices, model positive reading behaviors, and provide consistent motivational support at home. Establishing structured literacy routines and creating conducive reading environments may significantly enhance learners' reading engagement and comprehension skills.

Finally, for future researchers, it is recommended that similar studies be conducted using larger sample sizes and broader contextual variables to further validate and extend the findings. Additional investigations may explore other psychosocial, instructional, and socio-economic factors influencing reading comprehension. Longitudinal studies may also provide deeper insights into the long-term effects of motivation, anxiety, and environmental support on reading development.

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